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TAGS: [KCFE](#) [PARM](#) [PREL](#)
SUBJECT: HLTF: GUIDANCE FOR APRIL 28 MEETING

REF: STATE 023176 - March 12 HLTF Guidance

Classified by Donna Phelan, VCI/CCA Acting Office
Director, for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

1. (C) The focus of the April 28 High Level Task Force (HLTF) meeting will be a CFE "stocktaking" discussion based on an Ally's request that the U.S. provide a non-paper on the status of the elements of the Parallel Actions Package. Allies will also review plans for the NATO International Staff-hosted HLTF Off-Site brainstorming session scheduled for May 26-28 at the NATO School in Oberammergau and discuss how best to shape FM Steinmeier's June 10 senior-level seminar in Berlin on conventional arms control in Europe.

U.S. goals for the April 28 HLTF and related meetings are to:

- reinforce that, as in the Summit communique, Allies should continue to deliver a unified, consistent message on CFE at key upcoming events;

- shape the "stocktaking" discussion on the current status of the Parallel Actions Package into a straightforward review of the status of each element of the package to ensure a common understanding and assist in framing future discussions of next steps on CFE; the effect should be to identify the core issues that Allies need to consider as we look ahead to the off-site meeting in Oberammergau;

- seek further input from the German delegation on the status of their concept paper for the Steinmeier-proposed senior-level seminar in June and encourage using the May off-site as an opportunity to establish unified Alliance positions for the June seminar.

CONTACTS and BILATERALS.

2. (C) State VCI A/S Gottemoeller will meet with Russian Security and Disarmament Director Antonov in Rome on April 24 on START issues. We expect that Antonov will raise CFE on the margins of this meeting. This will present an opportunity for the U.S. to seek Russian reaction to U.S. ideas on Georgia that were advanced during CFE bilateral discussions in Geneva in December 2008, and for Antonov to offer any new ideas on the way ahead now that the new Administration is taking shape. Allies will be particularly interested in a readout of the April 24 discussion as it pertains to CFE. U.S. rep may report on any developments provided by A/S Gottemoeller following the April 24 meeting.

WAY AHEAD: CFE "STOCKTAKING" AND THE MAY 26-28 HLTF OFF-SITE

13. (C) At the March 12 HLTF, Allies called for a U.S. non-paper (septel) providing an issue-by-issue update on the Parallel Actions Package to serve as the basis for a thorough discussion of each element of the package and the status of the current dialogue. Some Allies may also be interested in engaging in a preliminary discussion of possible next steps in preparation for a more in-depth discussion on the way ahead at the HLTF off-site in the end of May. U.S. rep should be prepared to review the points addressed in the U.S. non-paper and respond to any questions for clarification based on previous readouts of U.S.-Russia bilateral discussions. The aim is not to engage in a detailed assessment of each element, but rather establish/reinforce a common understanding of the status of each issue and of the package in its entirety as a basis for moving forward.

14. (C) U.S. rep should seek Allied views on the range of issues in the U.S. non-paper with a view to reaching a common understanding of core substantive challenges. We see four: the flank, Russia's "suspension" of its CFE implementation, Georgia, and Moldova. We would also welcome preliminary ideas for a way forward that could promote discussion at the off-site and other upcoming events on conventional arms control specifically and European security more broadly. As appropriate, U.S. rep may draw from the following points in generally addressing the state of play on CFE in the context of current proposals on European security and recent progress in efforts to reset the U.S.-Russia relationship:

- Our openness to dialogue on cooperative approaches to enhance European security and to invigorate dialogue with Russia to resolve problems, address concerns, and build practical cooperation sent a useful message at Strasbourg-Kehl and in the first meeting between U.S. and Russian Heads of State.

- On April 1, 2009, President Obama and President Medvedev expressed mutual interest in exploring a comprehensive dialogue on strengthening Euro-Atlantic and European security, including existing commitments and President Medvedev's June 2008 proposal on these issues.

- The U.S. welcomes discussion of ways to improve Euro-Atlantic security and agrees with Allies that the OSCE, with its inclusive membership and comprehensive concept of security which includes human and economic dimensions, as well as political-military aspects, is the most appropriate forum for such a discussion. We are also open to engaging in discussions with the Russians about their ideas in other appropriate fora, such as the NATO-Russia Council.

- Our aim should be to enhance the effectiveness of existing Euro-Atlantic institutions and agreements, not replace them with new ones. Russia's decision not to perform its CFE obligations is particularly significant and must be addressed in parallel with broader discussions on Euro-Atlantic security.

- The U.S., together with our Allies, has been seeking a way forward with Russia that preserves the benefits of CFE and its core principles. Allied support for the "parallel actions package" has been unwavering and essential; the U.S. is committed to engaging Russia on arms control and encouraging Russia to negotiate seriously.

- We are very interested in Allies' views on how to proceed in the next months and in using the upcoming HLTF off-site to determine how best to use the June 10 conference in Berlin in advancing our common approach. A review of where we are on the parallel actions approach should be useful as we develop ideas for moving

ahead.

GERMAN SEMINAR ON THE FUTURE OF ARMS CONTROL IN EUROPE

15. (C) At the March 12 HLTF Germany repeated assurances that they would take on board input and concerns expressed by Allies and would continue the consultative process to finalize the goals and objectives for its June 10 seminar in Berlin on "The Future of Conventional Arms Control in Europe." Germany has not yet distributed a revised paper, but we understand from U.S. Embassy Berlin that German rep Biontino has discussed the paper and overall concept with Russian CFE expert Anton Mazur (at the March RACVIAC Seminar held in Zagreb Croatia) and intends to circulate an updated version of the paper at the April 28 HLTF. U.S. rep should draw on refTel to address any outstanding U.S. concerns regarding the paper on the margins or in the HLTF as appropriate; seek further details on how Germany intends to proceed with seminar planning; seek feedback from the German rep on any discussion with Russian reps; and encourage using the May off-site as a key event for Allies to prepare for the June seminar.

DATE OF NEXT HLTF MEETING

16. (SBU) An HLTF Off-Site to be hosted by the NATO School in Oberammergau is already scheduled for 26-28 May. This event will serve as key opportunity to prepare for the June 10 German seminar in Berlin. We expect the NATO IS will provide further details on logistics at the HLTF.
CLINTON